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AUTHOR Nowak, Mary Jane; Stilwell, William E.
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ABSTRACT

In an attempt to establish an empirical criterion base from which viable and valid decisions can be made regarding "what makes a good social worker" and "how do we know when we have a 'good' social worker," a criterion mastery learning base is proposed which addresses itself to the change agent role of the social worker. Developed is a model which consists of three conceptual areas: environmental influences, social work skills, and supportive skills, joined by feedback of evaluative information. Each of these areas is independent in the accountability model for social work education. Fourteen construction areas can be refined into a number of elements, modules, or capsules of instruction. The focus is on the latter two conceptual areas, social work skills and supportive skills. Accountability in social work education is not an alternative but a societal demand. The worth of this model will only be determined by its implementation in the real world. Its degree of success may provide valuable information for change in social work education. (Author/KE)

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DEVELOPMENTAL MODELS FOR ACCOUNTABILITY IN UNDERGRADUATE SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

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Mary Jane Nowak
Assistant Dean for Student Affairs
and
Assistant Professor
College of Social Professions
University of Kentucky

William E. Stilwell
Associate Professor
Department of Educational Psychology
and Counseling
College of Education
University of Kentucky

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DEVELOPMENTAL MODELS FOR ACCOUNTABILITY IN UNDERGRADUATE SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

Undergraduate social work education programs across the nation have suddenly found themselves in a New Age of American Education, the Age of Accountability.[1] From within the walls of schools of social work the sounds of consternation and rethinking can be heard. Pincus and Minahan, among others, have led social work education's response to the call for innovation in the preparation of social work practitioners.[2] They argued for changes in the substance rather than in the polemics related to social work education. Indeed, representative voices from the community[3] and from educators[4] have stimulated the need for

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[1]See for example, Scott Briar, "The Age of Accountability", Social Work 18 (January 1973) p. 2; Emanuel Trapp, "Expectation, Performance and Accountability", Social Work 19 (March 1974) pp. 139-148; and Marvin L. Rosenberg and Ralph Brody, "The Threat or Challenge of Accountability", Social Work 19 (May 1974) pp. 344-350.

[2]Allen Pincus and Anne Minahan, "Toward a Model for Teaching a Basic First Year Course in Methods of Social Work Practice". In Lillian Ripple (ed.), Innovations in Teaching Social Work Practice (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1970); Allen Pincus and Anne Minahan, Social Work Practice: Model and Method (Itasca, IL: F. E. Peacock, 1973); and Council on Social Work Education, Approaches to Innovation in Social Work Education (New York: CSWE, 1974).

[3]See for example, Family Service Association of America, "Position Statement of Family Service Agencies Regarding Graduate Schools of Social Work" (New York, 1972). (Mimeographed).

[4]Joseph L. Vigilante, "Education Matures to the Undergraduate Level", Social Work 19 (September 1974) pp.638-645.

change in social work education. For example, clients and our professional colleagues have urged us to become more active change agents and to develop more powerful ways to work with people.[5]

Similarly, within undergraduate education a new emphasis on experiential learning (practicum) systems and a reanalysis of social work programs themselves has provoked much "sound and fury".[6] We will address ourselves to the issues these influential constituencies have raised by offering developmental models for accountability in social work education. These models, we believe, will help program managers (deans, assistant deans and faculty) to become more sensitive to the changing needs of their constituencies.

The combined effects of social clamor for more effective programs for tomorrow's social work education has again raised the proverbial question: How do you know a 'good' social worker when you see one? In an effort to internalize the public's concern for effective social work practice, we must struggle with the following "in-house" issues:

-How can social work education programs demonstrate their own effectiveness?
-How can the program show that some faculty are more efficient and effective with certain types of students?
-How can these programs demonstrate that some instructional techniques are more effective with certain kinds of social work students?
-How can social work programs demonstrate that certain

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[5]See for example, Social Work 19, No. 5 (September 1974).

[6]Vigilante, "Education Matures".

learning experiences are more effective than other program experiences?

The answers to these questions probably will be found when a prototype program is established to demonstrate empirically the usefulness of each element in the social work program. The remainder of this paper is our attempt to suggest what one prototype program would embody.

Prototype for Social Work Education

Initially, the application of general systems theory to social work education delimits systematic boundaries and provides a frame of reference for specification of constructs and their related elements.[7] In Figure 1 a field system model for social work is presented. Basically, we are

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Insert figure 1 about here

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developing our models from the traditional input-process-output model of systems theory.[8] In our conceptualization of a social work education system we pay particular attention to the subsystems within the process function. Each of these four subsystems, assessment, management, curricular experiences, and supportive resources, bare a logical and

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[7]Bela H. Banathy, "A Structure of Levels in Systems Education". Paper presented to the Special Interest Group on Systems Research at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York, 1971 and T. Antoinette Ryan, "Systems Techniques for Programs of Counseling and Counselor Education". Educational Technology, 1969, 9(6), pp.7-17.

[8]E. West Churchman, The Systems Approach. (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1968).

interdependent relationship with each other.[9] Feedback information, derived from the practitioner, employers, and clients, influence the process function and the student's input in our model.

The assessment subsystem is the major and crucial focus of this paper. Figure 1 shows that assessment has direct and indirect influences on all other subsystems in the process function. Assessment in this model is continuous: it focuses upon the student, at entrance, during preparation, and as a graduate. Therefore, the assessment subsystem is a logical starting point for systematic analysis of an on-going social work education program.

Analysis of the assessment subsystem has led to a schema for continuous appraisal of candidates in a social work program. Figure 2 shows significant points in the assessment schema: phases, processes,

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Insert figure 2 about here

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procedures and decision alternatives, and major information sources. The schema depicts the cyclic character of assessment. As a result of this cyclic assessment the data in the social work program is continually maintained and up-dated.

More specifically the schema suggests four phases in this program: admissions, advancement, graduation, and certification levels. The

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[9]Robert M. Gagne and Leslie J. Briggs, Principles of Instructional Design. (Hinsdale, IL: Dryden Press, 1974).

students proceed through these phases while they are being sequentially evaluated. The purpose of these sequential phases is to develop social workers who must be interactive and not passive.

However, the schema lacks an important element. As one reviews this schema for continuous appraisal of social work education it becomes apparent that the one missing ingredient is the criterion base upon which assessment decisions are based. This omission commonly occurs in most models of social work programs.

Numerous strategies for the development of a criterion base are available to social work educators (e.g., expert opinion, task analysis, model conceptualization, and empirical data base). For the development of relevant and meaningful criterion base data, our approach has been to focus on major social work activities--changing client, action and target systems behaviors.[10] The criterion mastery learning base proposed in this paper addresses itself to the change agent role for the social worker. It is recognized that other roles may and do exist which the social worker must fulfill. But, it is accepted that the social worker as an agent of change constitutes the major role for the present and the future. Thus we are committed to systematically analyzing the components which could contribute to our mastery learning model.

Our approach has led to the development of the model presented in Figure 3 which consists of three conceptual areas: environmental

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[10]Pincus and Minahan, Social Work Practice.

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Insert figure 3 about here

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influences, social work skills and supportive skills, joined by feedback of evaluative information. Each of these areas is independent in our accountability model for social work education. We see fourteen construct areas which can be refined into a number of elements, modules or capsules of instruction in this program. Our focus will be on the latter two conceptual areas, social work skills and supportive skills which will be briefly described.

Social work skills are systematic problem-solving areas related to changing client behaviors. In this area we have identified for modulation six concepts: Knowledge of the Problem-Solving Process; Identification of Client, Target, Action and Change Agent Systems; Development of Objectives for Intervention; Consideration of Alternative Models of Intervention; Setting and Implementation of Contract; Evaluation of Change Agent Effectiveness and Feedback. Supportive skills are integrated with social work skills to facilitate the change agent in the problem-solving process. The eight areas which can also be analyzed and developed into modules of instruction are: Knowledge of Human Behavior and the Social Environment; Social Welfare Policy and Services; Research; Ability to Establish Relationships with Client System; Ability to Interview, Collect Data, Implement Plans, Interpret Agency Policy; Use of Communication Skills - Verbal and Non - Verbal; Use of Community Resources; and Management Skills. Such a curriculum model

allows the undergraduate program manager to improve, recreate, or drop modules in a systematic manner.

We recognize that most of these areas are commonly presented in most undergraduate programs. Our purpose is to codify them within the program and to establish their interdependence within an accountability model for undergraduate social work education. Some basic social work texts and curricular material (e.g., Pincus and Minahan, 1973, Loewenberg and Dolgoff, 1971)[11] can be used. Still, we see the need to borrow texts (e.g., Gazda, 1974, Carkhuff, 1973)[12] and curricular materials from other professional training programs (e.g., counselor training). Further, we recognize the need to create new materials which will meet our students' and our program needs.

The implementation of mastery in an undergraduate social work education program requires extensive faculty in-service training in mastery learning theory and its application. Materials developed by

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[11]Pincus and Minahan, Social Work Practice and Frank Loewenberg and Ralph Dolgoff, Teaching of Practice Skills in Undergraduate Programs in Social Welfare and Other Helping Services (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1971).

[12]George M. Gazda, Frank R. Asbury, Fred J. Balzer, William C. Childers, R. Eric Desselle, Richard P. Walters, Human Relations Development: A Manual for Educators (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1973) and Robert R. Carkhuff, The Art of Helping (Amherst: Human Resources Development Inc., 1972).

Mager, Bloom, Block, Gagne, and Glaser[13] can be implemented by knowledgeable, well-trained social work faculty, educational psychologists in social work training programs, and faculty from the college of education of the host university.

Implementation of mastery learning in a social work program entails restructuring of course materials measuring entry behavior, varying instruction, gaining formative and summative evaluations, providing learning correctives, and allowing enough time for students to master the materials. Thus, we advocate a mastery learning approach to accountibility among the program managers, faculty members and students.

Implementation of Capsulized Social Work Education Program

Before this approach to change in social work education can be undertaken, attitudinal and philosophical shifts must occur in the

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[13]Robert F. Mager, Preparing Instructional Objectives (Belmont, CA: Fearon Publishing, 1962); Robert F. Mager, Developing Attitude Toward Learning (Belmont, CA: Fearon Publishing, 1968); Robert F. Mager, Goal Analysis (Belmont, CA: Fearon Publishing, 1972); Robert F. Mager and Peter Piper, Analyzing Performance Problems (Belmont, CA: Fearon Publishing, 1970); Benjamin J. Bloom, Max D. Engelman, Edward J. Furst, Walker H. Hill, and David R. Krathwohl. Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals. Handbook I: Cognative Comain (New York: David McKay Company, Inc. 1956).
Benjamin S. Bloom, Thomas J. Hastings and Genges F. Madins, Handbook on Formative and Summative Evaluation of Student Learning (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1971); John H. Block (ed.), Mastery Learning: Theory and Practice (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971); Robert M. Gagne, The Conditions of Learning (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970 (2nd edition); Robert M. Gagne, "Task Analysis", Educational Psychologist, 1974, 11, pp. 11-18; Robert Glaser, "Adopting the Elementary School Curriculum to Individual Performance" in Proceedings of the 1969 Invitational Conference on Testing Problems (Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Services, 1968).

institutional and individual dimensions. The first dimension for attitudinal and philosophical shifts must occur on the institutional level. Schools or Departments of Social Work and their host universities must shift their funds in a systematic manner to support change in social work education. In this regard, the Council on Social Work Education has made a commitment of resources and some support monies to fundamental and systematic revision of social work education programs.[14] Indeed the CSWE accreditation document[15] encourages planned experimentation and imaginative educational development in social work education. There is wide-spread recognition of CSWE's need for information on innovations in social work teaching which can then be shared with council members.[16] Thus, we see an important shift beginning through the work of the accrediting agency for social work education. Much more shifting of attitudes and policies must still occur.

The second dimension for attitudinal and philosophical change is among the social work candidates and the faculty. These individuals will have to be oriented to an instructional capsule program for social work

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[14]Arnulf M. Pins, "Social Work Education in a Period of Change: A Report of CSWE Policy Decisions, Activities and Services in 1970-71," Social Work Education Reporter, Vol. XIX, No. 2 (April-May 1971).

[15]Council on Social Work Education, "Standards for the Accreditation of Baccalaureate Degree Programs in Social Work," Social Work Education Reporter, Vol. 21, No. 3 (September, 1973) pp. 13-16.

[16]Lillian Ripple (ed.) Innovations in Teaching Social Work Practice. (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1970).

education. Examples of changes in orientation for both candidates and faculty are:

Candidate

1. Must be prepared for frequent self assessment, setting goals and revising program of studies.

2. Should be prepared to engage in self initiated individualized instruction and maximum employment of instructional capsules at his own "best" pace.

3. Be prepared for evaluation of his peers and by his peers.

Faculty

1. Need for in-service orientation and training in relation to acceptance and management of change.

2. Must be prepared to enter into a cooperative interactive learning experience with each candidate in a quasi clinical setting.

3. Need for awareness and acceptance of attitudinal and philosophical concepts necessary to implement change.

4. Should be prepared for essential involvement and communication with candidates, agency practitioners, community, and lay citizens.

To implement this approach to change, a realistic plan is required. The plan is complex and will require an extended period for implementation. It is proposed that the implementation stages for this effort will include the following types of activities:

- An extensive use of available information.
- Augmentation of this information with a comprehensive standard test battery.
- Administration and analysis of this test battery.
- Administration and analysis of follow-up behavioral criteria or measures.
- Continuous revision of selection criteria.

- Development of social work education program expectancy tables.
- Development of discriminative function tables.
- Development of interest in teaching stimulation indicators and techniques.
- In-service training for both candidates and faculty in the use of predictive and discriminative tables and the interest simulation tools.
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of the resulting measurement information as a criterion base for decision-making.

A logical, longitudinal phasing-in of the program changes requires a four year schedule. The critical major activities for each year are shown in Table 1.

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Insert table 1 about here

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An analysis of these activities over the four year period reveals that they are cyclical in nature. Each succeeding cycle provides an information base which expands and increases its validity and reliability throughout the programatic implementation. This feedback facilitates revision and improvement of the social work education program criterion measures. Thus, the continuous development of the measures enables the assessment subsystem of the basic social work education system model to more effectively and efficiently perform its function. The relationships among all the activities listed in Table 1 in the longitudinal plan for programatic change are presented in Figure 4. This figure is an

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Insert Figure 4 about here

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expansion of the assessment subsystem (2.1) in Figure 1.

The Candidate Asscssment Model for Social Work Education (CAMSWE) is a basic input-process-output feedback system adapted to an educational situation. In Figure 4 the input function, a set of tentative objectives and strategies derived from the model and a test battery for gathering selection (1.0). This function provides input to the process function, Development Operations (2.0).

In the process function we have identified six subsystems: criterion statements, instrumentation, collection of data, analysis of data, development of expectancy tables and evaluation. Within this function the information from the program evaluation component may either feedback to the criterion statements in an iterative cycle or move to the output function, Screening Information (3.0).

The output function provides a sequence of matches between the program model's objectives and the social work-candidates' level of performance. The components of the output function are entering behaviors, anticipated levels of performance, expectations derived from the program model's objectives, comparisons between program objectives and the candidate to enter social work practice situation as an agent of change (4.0). This decision situation is a part of the schema presented in Figure 2.

Feedback within the process function has been pointed out. However, a larger feedback loop exists from 4.0 and 3.0 to both 2.0 and 1.0. This feedback loop provides empirically based information. It is this continuously returning information that suggest revisions to the screening functions, instructional capsules, expectancy tables, program function,

and post program data collection. The effect of this continuous feedback is to update the input criteria and the actual social work education program process.

Prototype Implications

The implications from this prototype for change in social work education can be divided into three areas. Briefly these implications will be presented and discussed:

1. Social Work Education Program

   a. The "courses" of the study, e.g., introduction to social welfare; the client system, change agent system, action system and target system; the problem-solving process; social welfare policy and services; human behavior and the social environment; and practicum will be reorganized into a curriculum based on the instructional capsul unit;

   b. The social work candidates will have to be oriented to working with capsulized instruction. In this new learning experience the candidates will be exposed, often for the first time, to making multiple decisions about their own "best" rate for learning. Thus, for some social work candidates more supervisory structure will have to be provided than for other candidates. This structured supervision will be gardually removed as the candidate gains facility in his working with capsulized instruction;

   c. The social work candidates will be learning how to manage their own learning experiences. In this implication we are saying that students will imitate even the most complex skills of their teacher, particularly when the teachers are rewarded for their behaviors;

   d. The social work candidates will learn how to judge and how to be judged by their peers. A new social worker often applies extreme kinds of judgments on his client (either too harsh or too lenient). The frequent practice in applying criteria even upon his peers should have the effect of stabilizing the social work candidate's application of criteria;

   e. Instructional faculty and field work staff will receive in-service training for permitting high level candidate participation in decision-making, evaluation, and innova-

tion. The expected behaviors of social work candidates will often appear to be as equals with the faculty and staff;

f. The issue of accountability in social work training will be made abundantly clear to both the candidate and his related faculty members. The candidate's entry levels of knowledge and performance will be analyzed in terms of instructional capsules that must be mastered in order for the candidate to reach the program's minimum levels of mastery. Based on this analysis, faculty and candidates can be held accountable for learning--gaining knowledge and performance skill--within an instructional capsule and within the program; and,

g. The change in social work education will integrate the progressional, general and specialized component through a continuous faculty-student learning team.

2. Experiential Learning (Practicum) Systems

a. An in-service training program for other social workers, supervisors, and agency personnel workers will be undertaken to prepare them for work with the social worker student who functions as a manager of their own learning experiences;

b. Agency directors will be able to hire social work staffs either on the basis of specific objectives mastered or on the basis of how rapidly the potential staff member mastered the list of objectives. The former consideration should result in "staff (change agent) balance" among the repertoire of practitioner behaviors. The latter consideration should influence the pace or style of management, since both practitioners might have nearly the same behaviors in their repertoires; and,

c. The focus of the profession of social work is upon accountability, individualized instruction, and the employment of people who can be responsive to these concerns. The social worker as an agent of change can help to meet these needs.

3. Community

a. Clients working with the social worker trained as a change agent will acquire many of the same management skills, i.e., they will apply management skills to their own living experiences. In this way they will identify and predict relationships within their environment. Once

> the client can identify and predict relationships, he can choose his own action (control his own experiences to his advantage). The client then becomes independent, free, even responsible within his environment.

Conclusion

This paper has presented a summarized perspective of a change model based on system analysis application to social work education. The critical missing link in social work education, the criterion base, has been specified in model form. This model is an attempt to establish an empirical criterion base from which viable and valid decisions can be made regarding "what makes a good social worker" and "how do we know when we have a 'good' social worker?" Accountability in social work education is not an alternative but a societal demand. The worth of this model will only be determined by its implementation in the real world. Its degree of success may provide valuable information for change in social work education. If social work education does not change, it will not be.

Figure 1

UNDERGRADUATE SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION SYSTEM MODEL

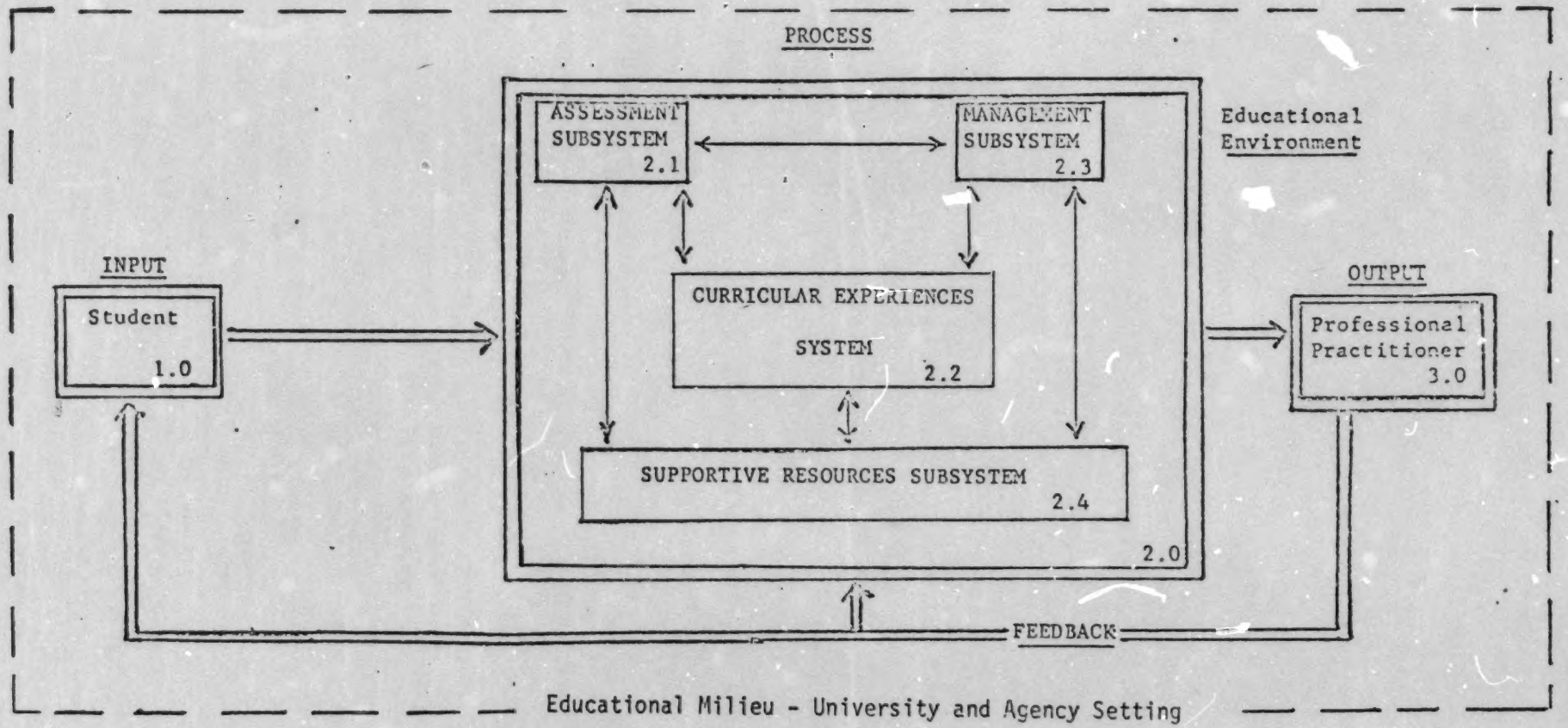

Figure 2

SCHEMA FOR CONTINUOUS APPRAISAL OF AN UNDERGRADUATE SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION PROGRAM

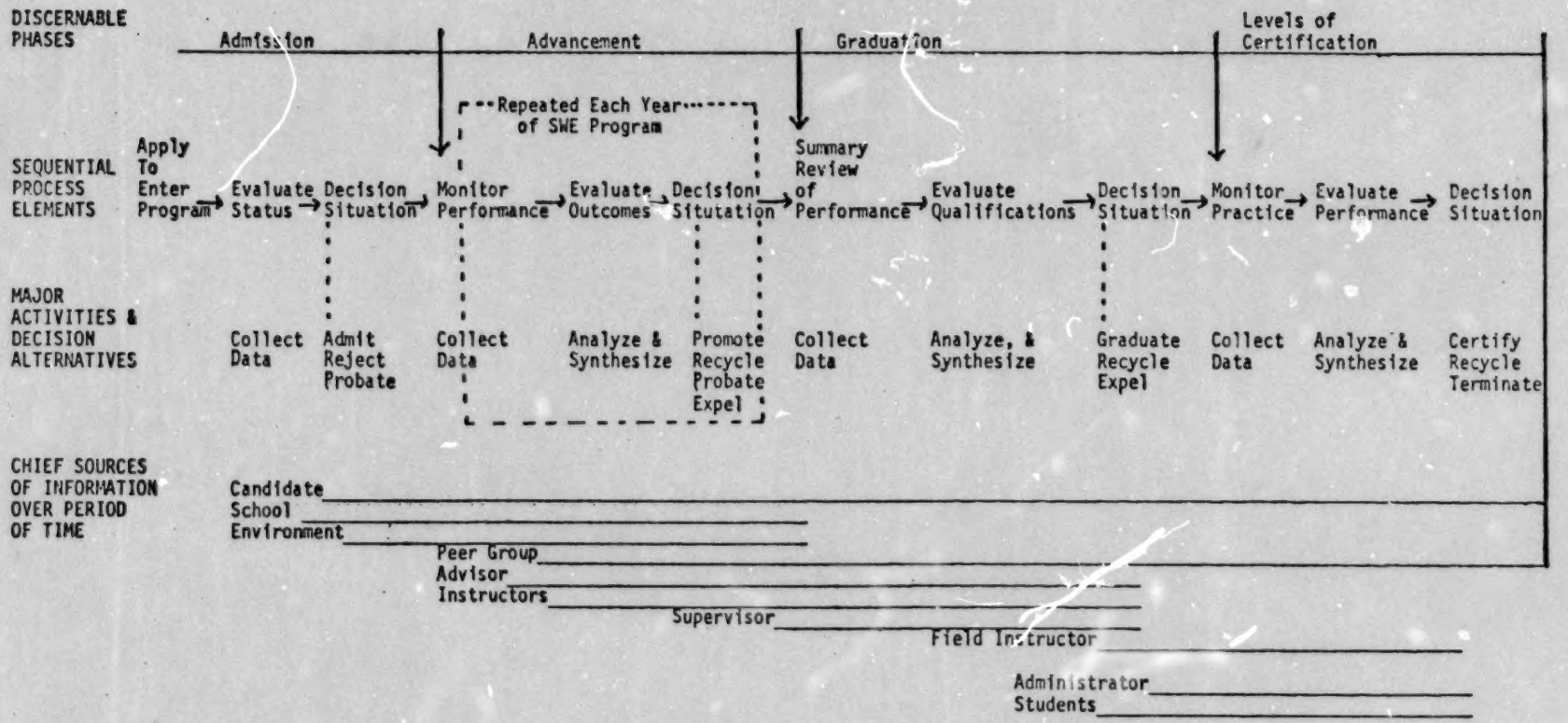

Figure 3

SOCIAL WORK SYSTEMS MODEL

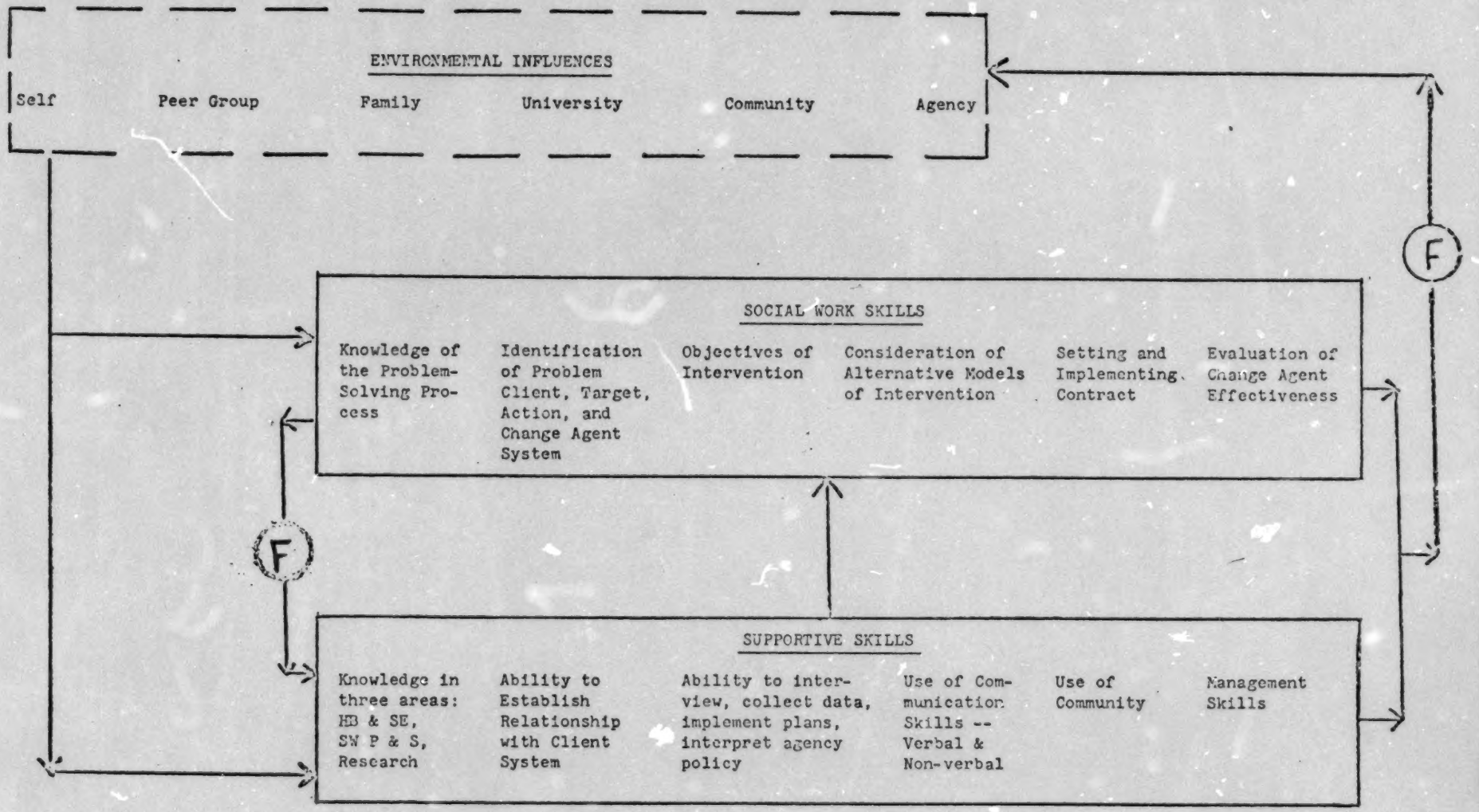
ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCES
Self
Peer Group
Family
University
Community
Agency
F
SOCIAL WORK SKILLS
Knowledge of the Problem-Solving Process
Identification of Problem Client, Target, Action, and Change Agent System
Objectives of Intervention
Consideration of Alternative Models of Intervention
Setting and Implementing Contract
Evaluation of Change Agent Effectiveness
F
SUPPORTIVE SKILLS
Knowledge in three areas: HB & SE, SW P & S, Research
Ability to Establish Relationship with Client System
Ability to interview, collect data, implement plans, interpret agency policy
Use of Communication Skills -- Verbal & Non-verbal
Use of Community
Management Skills

Figure 4

A STUDENT ASSESSMENT MODEL FOR SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION (CAMSWE)

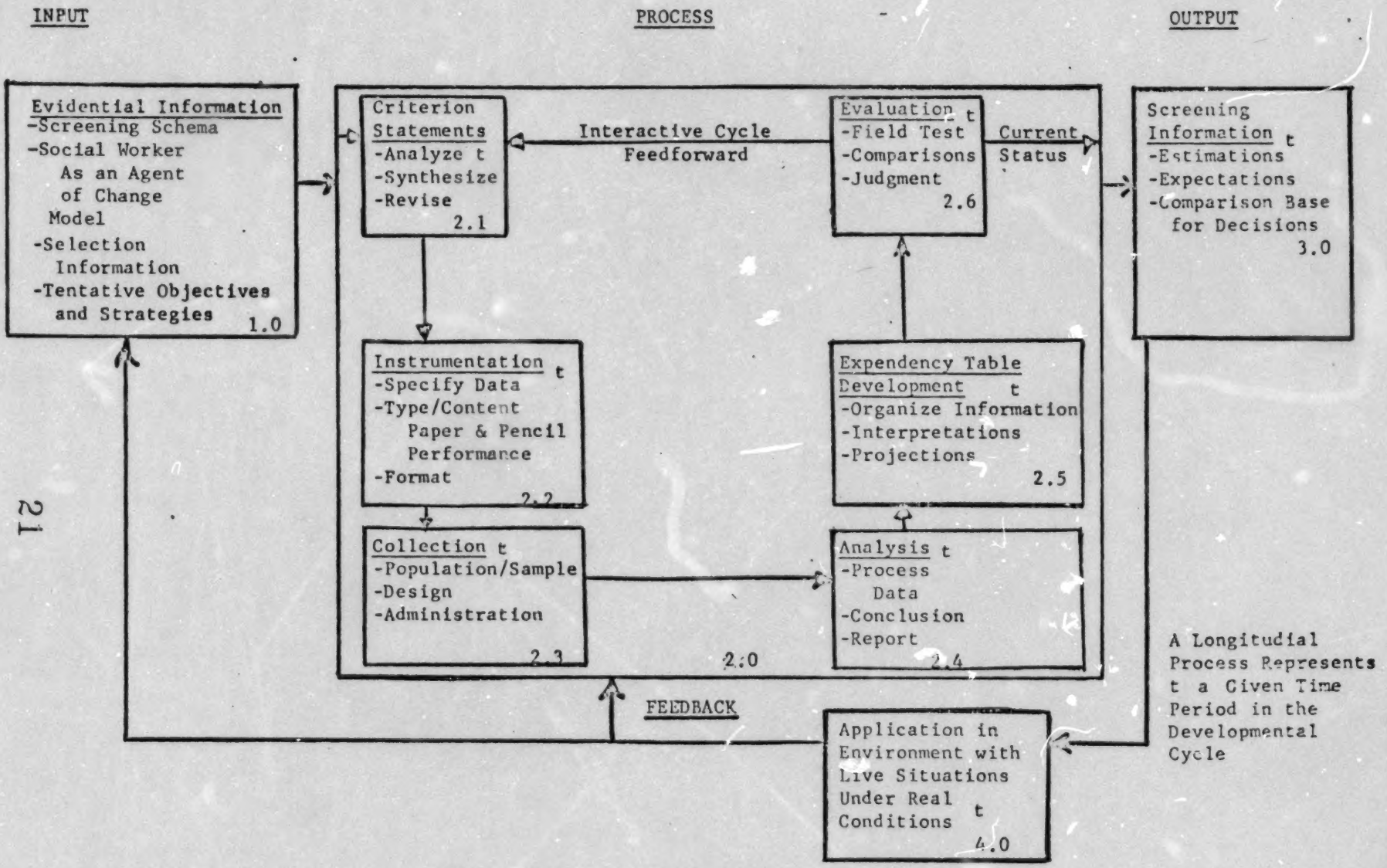

Table 1

MAJOR ACTIVITIES OVER TIME

Activities	Developmental Years 1	2	3	4
Develop Criteria	X			
Revise Criteria		X	X	X
Develop Test Battery	X			
Revise Test Battery		X	X	X
Administer Post Program Measures	X	X	X	X
Revise Post Program Measures		X	X	X
Administer Screening Devices	X	X	X	X
Revise Screening Devices		X	X	X
Develop Instructional Capsules		X		
Revise Instructional Capsules			X	X
Develop Simulation Experiences		X		
Revise Simulation Experiences			X	X
Develop Time Phases Knowledge Measures		X		
Revise Time Phases Knowledge Measures			X	X
Develop Orientation Programs		X		
Revise Orientation Programs			X	X
Analyze Data	X	X	X	X
Develop Expectancy & Discriminative Function Tables			X	
Revise Expectancy & Discriminative Function Tables				X
Develop Stimulation Techniques			X	
Revise Stimulation Techniques				X